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The Paradox of Peace

BY HERBERT L. WILLETT

Think not that I came to send peace on the earth. I came not to send peace but a sword. Matthew 10:34.

IT is a long bow-shot from the Christmas song of the angels to this startling and paradoxical utterance of Jesus. Yet such apparently difficult and perplexing statements were among the effective devices employed by him in his interpretations of his program for the world. They cut straight across the conventional ideas of his hearers, and compelled them to take more deliberate account of his purposes. When he said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God he challenged the entire thought-pattern of the age and of his followers, who had counted riches the token of the divine favor. And every effort to smooth away the startling and seemingly irrational character of the saying is in danger of missing the very object he had in view. At first men were shocked by his words; then they were angry at their defiance of popular opinion. But they went away to think the saying over, which they would not have done if it had been less disturbing. The same thing was true of other seeming paradoxes in the teachings of our Lord, such as his insistence that one must hate his father and mother, or his assertion that all foods were clean, or the still more repellent word about eating his flesh and drinking his blood. Time and traditional Christian usage have softened the meaning of such declarations of his; but to those who heard them first they must have brought incredible surprise and disapproval. And this was precisely the purpose of Jesus, who sought to arouse his hearers from their casual and conventional mood to a realization of the deeper meanings of his ministry.

Such was his purpose in making this statement regarding the sword. During his entire ministry he proclaimed the ideals of peace. In the Sermon on the Mount, which may be regarded as a summary of his program, he made it clear that his pattern of a new social order

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differed wholly from the contour of Jewish and Roman ambitions, with their emphasis on wealth, place, power, force and arms. Rather he exalted the poor, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers and the persecuted, as the real possessors of earth and the kingdom of heaven. But he warned his disciples that this attitude would bring them into sharp collision with the ideology of the times, and that they must be prepared for the conflict of opinions and judgments which they were certain to encounter. In making this clear he used one of his striking figures of speech, and advised those of his friends who had no weapons to sell their garments and buy them. That some of them took these words all too literally was evident when they showed him two swords, which led him to observe, half in surprise at their dullness and half in amusement, "Well, that will be enough!"

A VAIN DREAM OF PEACE

The Christmas season is proverbially the time for thoughts of peace and good will. The echoes of Armistice Day and its recurring celebrations are still in the air. In the early days of the world conflict of which that day was the happy ending a generous citizen of the republic sent a deputation overseas in a "peace ship," with the hope and purpose of "getting the men out of the trenches by Christmas." And that was an ideal quite in keeping with the historic meaning of that gracious anniversary. Failing wholly in that objective, and in the efforts of all the Christian forces in Europe and America to bring that war to a speedy end, it was the confident belief of the survivors and the multitudes who formed the circle of the witnessing nations that at least that tragedy, the worst that had ever befallen civilization, was the end of war. When inventory is taken of the enormous sum total of lives lost, of maimed and broken bodies, of treasure consumed, and most of all, of shattered morals, impoverished and resentful nations, and the certainty of continued and increasing animosities as the result of the conflict and the unjust treaties which it entailed, with Christian races on both sides of the conflict and only Christians involved, it might well seem that the words of Jesus were to be taken with sad literalness, "I came not to bring peace, but a sword."

In this Christmas period, when the hearts of all peoples should be gladdened with the festal memories and expectations suggested by the hallowed time, it seems that after less than a score of years since the thunder of the great guns died away, the restless and turbulent nations are once more beating the tom-toms and voicing the time-old excuses for plunging afresh down the blind alley of warfare. The strange feature of this resurgence of the war spirit is the universal profession of the love of peace, the world-wide deprecation of the resort to arms, the complete agreement regarding the futility and the brutality of armed conflict, coupled with an almost complete cynicism regarding the avoidance of an approaching renewal of hostilities. The preparations for international conflict are far more extensive than in 1914; the sums spent for armament on the part of all the major nations are greater by at least a third than at any time during the world contest; the places in which war might start tomorrow on a cosmic scale are far and away more numerous than on that fateful August of twenty-two years ago, and already the flames are lighted in Spain, in Palestine, in China and along more than one frontier where international jealousies and resentments are flaring.

THE FOLLY OF WAR

Yet the greatest military leaders in modern history have insisted on the folly and futility of war. Frederick the Great, the father of the entire military system in Europe, wrote: "If my soldiers would think for themselves not one would remain in the ranks." General Grant declared: "Nothing has ever been decided by war that could not be decided without it; and if decided after the war, why not before?" Lord Kitchener, who spent most of his life in soldiering, affirmed that he had never seen a war out of which any permanent peace had come. Major General Sir Frederick Maurice says: "I went into the British army believing that if you want peace you must prepare for war. I believe now that if you prepare for war you will get war." And regarding the responsibility of Christian people in relation to war, two notable commanders have this to say: "It is the business of the churches to make my business impossible" (Field Marshall Lord Haig); and "The responsibility is entirely on the professing Christians of the United States. If another war should come, they will be responsible for every drop of blood shed" (General Tasker H. Bliss).

In spite of these and volumes of similar import from men who understand the awful meaning of battle, the work of war preparation goes on apace, and the skies are darkening with the menace of a coming conflict. Colonel Lindbergh uses these sinister words: "As I travel over Europe I am more than ever impressed with the seriousness of the situation. . . . We have lived to see our harmless wings turned into carriers of destruction. . . . A security system resting on intelligence, not on force, must be found." The dragon's teeth of hatred and suspicion are being industriously sown, and only effective activity in behalf of peace can prevent a bloody harvest. One can almost hear the prophetic words of Savonarola in the Duomo of Florence as, in anticipation of the oncoming armies of France, he quoted as the text of a sermon that thrilled and terrified his vast audience, the words of Genesis: "Behold I do bring a flood of waters over all the earth."

MILEPOSTS OF PROGRESS

It may seem that this is a strange and inappropriate theme for consideration at the Christmas time. But if it is true that the ideals of Jesus are to set the standards of conduct for mankind, and the promise of the angel song of peace is to have any meaning today, it must be affirmed with emphasis that among the evils against which he is bringing the sword of his condemnation and fierce wrath the most portentous and devastating is war. Many enemies of the race have been met and overcome through the power of our Lord and the efforts of his followers through the years. The mileposts of his progress are visible along the centuries. But this anachronism of war still continues to confront and defy the

forces of righteousness. It is happily true that no longer is it the subject of apology and justification as was once the case. Excuses and alibis have now to be discovered where in former days it was the subject of boasting. Whatever vaunting and heroics are indulged over military aggression today are likely to hide behind the screen of national necessity, or defense, or some other specious pretext which it is not difficult to penetrate. It is at least a vast moral gain that no one now apologizes for war.

NATIONALISM AND WAR

The causes of conflict have been manifold. Battle has been waged over racial prejudices, territorial frontiers, the wealth of cities and soil, the possession of markets, slaves and women. But probably the sentiment called nationalism is among the most potent incentives to aggression. It is a curious fact that the mere accidents of mountain ranges, river courses and even invisible dividing lines have separated peoples whose clan relationships were intimate and whose language and customs were much alike, and have prompted them to undertake wars against each other over insignificant differences which were superficially assigned to "national" interests. Since the whole question of racial origins and cultures is far too involved to offer clear lines of national demarkation, and the boundaries of states have been moved in every century, the assumption of basic national interests appears superficial and unconvincing to the scientist and the historian. The trek of a tribe to a fresh pasture-land creates a new nation, in spite of all mingling of strains and fusion of contacts. And these accidental factors induce a growing emotion of possession and patriotism which is easily stimulated to antagonism and fighting when even trivial misunderstandings arise.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

Symbols of nationalism, like flags, emblems, songs, slogans, take on immense significance when once the communal emotion of an area is aroused.

In such instances the sentiment called patriotism assumes an importance out of all proportion to the merits of the controversy, and not infrequently the original motives which initiated the conflict are lost to sight as the tide of hatred rises. Each nation, large or small, tends to swell up like an angry boil, and to regard its rights, its honor and its interests as the supreme issue.

The statue of Edith Cavell which stands just off Trafalgar Square in London bears an inscription which records words which were among the last uttered by that devoted and sacrificial nurse, whose death before a firing squad shocked the world. "Patriotism is not enough," was her summing up of the inadequacy and shallowness of the common thinking of humanity, which can permit such tragedies as war to grow out of national jealousies into a world conflagration. Hatred is easily generated between people who do not know each other, and who are poisoned by vicious and false reports of each other's motives and conduct. And one of the sentiments on which it is most easy for designing propagandists to play is this one of nationalism, where emotion untempered by trustworthy knowledge is so readily engaged.

Hardly less powerful as a promoter of the war system is the military spirit which has been glorified through many centuries, and which employs all the arts of persuasion in its appeal to the popular mind. The sword has been the emblem of heroism and victory down the long avenue of history. Until recent years the chief interest of historians was warfare. Generations of children were inoculated with the impression that the soldier's life was the most spectacular and glorious of all vocations. The textbooks on history were replete with the wars, battles, conquests and military exploits of the fighting men, set apart for special admiration. It is only in recent years that the much more important services of artisans, inventors, scientists, publicists, authors and statesmen have been given proportionate interpretation. There is a level of culture to which the trappings and weapons of the military make far more appeal than do the more sober and less ostentatious garments of citizen life. If the men in the ranks were dressed in the unattractive garb in which the Negro and Chinese work battalions were rigged out in the late conflict there would be far less inducement to join the army.

THE ANCIENTS ON WAR

This attraction of the war enterprise and its belongings to the young manhood of the race has been the theme of poets and philosophers through the years. "Of itself does the iron [the sword] draw a man to it," is a pregnant line of the Odyssey. The recognition of this lure of war and its decorations did not prevent even the older generations from understanding that it was at best a bad business. Moti, the noted philosopher of China, declared: "China does not put her best metal into swords, nor her best sons into the army," and it is an interesting fact that several nations of antiquity placed the soldier's business lowest in the scale of occupation. Xenophon in considering the different classes

among the people, the soldier, the artisan, the scholar, writes: "It is not the part of those who cultivate the intellect to use violence; for to adopt such a course belongs to those who possess brute force without intellect." One of the German leaders in the World War lamented the fact that modern warfare had been relegated so largely to trench fighting, where the picturesque and impressive movements of cavalry were no longer possible.

It is natural for people of the military class to insist upon the necessity of that service, and the glory associated with the profession of arms. It is the atmosphere in which they live. While they are sincere in their deprecation of any outbreak of hostilities, yet there is always in the back of their minds the fact that war brings much more rapid promotion than does peace, to say nothing of opportunities for distinguished service. It is for this reason that men of the military caste are expected by their colleagues to emphasize the value and necessity of the army and navy on every occasion on which they have the privilege of public speech. It has come to be expected that when officers of either branch of the service are invited to participate in the exercises of a patriotic character, on Memorial Day or Independence Day, they will take occasion to stress the need of preparedness, and the duty of the nation to strengthen its fighting forces. Perhaps it is for this reason that we have the anachronism of two departments of government devoted to the interests of warfare, those of the army and the navy, while there is as yet no department of peace or of education in our national machinery. Friends of peace are sensitive to these anomalies.

"MERCHANTS OF DEATH"

One of the powerful incentives to the promotion of the war enterprise, or at the least to the avoidance of strong measures for its prevention, is the financial profit accruing to makers of munitions and other war materials in war times. The enormous fortunes which have been built up by makers of military equipment and dealers in the commodities handled by these "merchants of death," are proof of the fact that the opportunities for enrichment at such times override the ordinary sentiments of humanity, and encourage a traffic which sets at defiance all the ideals of internationalism and good will. The disclosures made in congressional inquiries during the past two years have made clear this phase of the unholy craft of murder. The makers of the instruments of death need a market for their goods, and are not particular as to the nationality of the buyers. If it so happens that soldiers of their own country are killed by missiles of their manufacture, it is of course regrettable but hardly to be avoided. And this indictment has been proved true of a number of the munition plants in different lands. It is no adequate answer to such accusations to insist that such organizations as the Du Ponts and the Bethlehem (strange misuse of a name sacred to the Christmas season!) Steel Corporation produce other commodities which are employed in essential and worthy industries. It is evident past all misreading that the volume of products and the amount of profit go up in proportion to the war demand.

A common excuse for engaging in war is the plea of national needs. Germany lost her colonies as a result of the World War, and demands their return or any equivalent colonial area. Japan must have room for its expanding population, and therefore must have Manchuria and northern China, although the climate of both regions is too cold to invite Japanese migration. Italy demands mineral resources which her soil does not contain, and also space for an increasing number of people, which at the same time curiously enough Mussolini is endeavoring to augment by the offer of rewards for larger families. Great Britain must safeguard her Indian possessions, and for this reason strengthens her hold upon the Mediterranean highway and upon Palestine. Russia speeds up her industrial program to prepare for eventualities with Japan and Germany, and exhibits proudly the largest army in the world. And the United States, with no policy of aggression, and in the act of sending ambassadors of peace to the Latin American republics, provides the largest war budget known in any peace year. These are diverting commentaries on the Christian motives professed by all but one of these nations.

"DEFENSIVE" WARS

Perhaps the most puzzling plea in behalf of war measures is that of national defense. No war has been started in modern times that was not defined as a measure of self-protection by the aggressor. No matter how inoffensive the invaded country may be, or how boastful and insolent the assailant, the alibi of need for defense is the apology for attack. It does not matter how remote are the justifications for such a claim, it is the plea urged as the only respectable motive that can be advanced. It is perhaps a satisfaction to the moral sense of the world that at least this attempt at self-vindication is made as contrasted with the once accepted excuse of kings and other military adventurers that they fought for the extension of their domains or for the mere satisfaction of ruthless conquest. Some apology for aggression is now demanded for the ethical sentiment of humanity, and this one of defense appears the least absurd. Yet there is something naïve in the German claim, for example, that the invasion of Belgium was an act of self-protection, and the same could be said of other operations of recent years.

PROPAGANDA AND WAR

The power of propaganda has to be given a conspicuous place among the causes of war. When a ruler or a cabinet or an army clique has decided on a policy of military activity against another people it is not difficult to employ the facilities of the press and other means of public appeal in the creation of sentiment in approval of the intended campaign. It is an astonishing fact that the entire mentality of a nation may be transformed in a brief period. Particularly is this the case when these instruments of publicity are in the hands of an autocrat or an oligarchy. Even in a democracy where there is supposed to be a free press it is often the case that the commercial interests of the newspapers dictate a policy of suspicion and hatred against the alleged enemy, where the actual situation is concealed, and a whole people become the victims of a false and vicious propaganda.

The completely baseless atrocity stories so widely spread by the press and platform during the World War are instances of this practice. Perhaps there is some comfort to the fair-minded citizen in the fact that in the recent presidential campaign in the United States so much of the party press was completely discredited, and the malignant charges and partisan predictions were quietly refuted by the voting public. Never again will the claim of the newspaper to be the molder of public opinion be taken quite so seriously as formerly. Nevertheless the influence of a venal and unprincipled journalism is a hindering and disastrous force in the struggle for a warless world. It would be unthinkable that the agents of public information, like the newspapers, the radio and the moving pictures should deliberately promote such crimes as robbery, arson, kidnaping and murder. Yet all of them are guilty of condoning if not actually furthering the crime of war, which has been declared by all the civilized nations to be an outlawed and despicable sin.

Whatever may be the attitude of the average person toward war at other seasons of the year, surely at the Christmas time when the entire system discloses itself as in such violent opposition to the Christmas spirit, and to all the ideals for which the gospel stands, there can be no tolerance felt for so barbarous a method of adjusting the differences of the race. It is only as the Christmas spirit spreads through the entire year and to all the kindreds of mankind that the hopes of heaven and earth for an era of good will among men can come to fruition.

THE CHURCH AND WAR

How in this Christmas time and through the months which are to follow may the ideals of peace be promoted? There is still time to save the world from another carnival of bloodshed if the enginery of toleration and good will can be set adequately in motion. It is the belief of careful observers that the nations of the old world are preparing definitely for war in the near future. None of them is fully ready at the present moment. It is commonly predicted that two years will intervene before there is an aggressive war thrust on the part of any of the arming nations, unless some unhappy episode should ignite the magazine of emotional explosives. That thing happened in 1914. It might happen again, and some practiced authorities believe that the fuses are burning close to the powder. But if there is still a time of salvation, something can be done to defer the tragedy or better still to prevent its occurrence.

The church of God throughout the world can pray earnestly and continuously for the divine assistance in all efforts to prevent so direful an event. And such prayers will imply on the part of all who thus unite a determination to think thoughts of peace, and to will that peace may prevail. Such a united and determined purpose on the part of all people of good will cannot fail to have its impact upon the thoughtful citizenry of all lands, and to aid in the creation of an atmosphere of understanding which may go far toward checking the impulse to hostilities. Every effort is worth while in a time so portentous and threatening.

International conferences can be held. In spite of the fact that such efforts in behalf of disarmament, limitation of arms, the cultivation of the peace spirit and the pledge to outlaw war as an instrument of national policy, have been held repeatedly, at Washington, Paris, London, Lausanne, Locarno and other places, resulting in such pacts as the Briand-Kellogg agreement, but have seemed of little worth in averting conflict, still every one of these consultations registers a new degree of public opinion on the theme of world friendship, and the failures experienced only stimulate the friends of peace to fresh endeavors in behalf of the wished for era of good will. Such conferences as those of Pacific Relations and Williamstown have an educational value more far-reaching than can be appreciated at the moment, and the momentum gained for the peace movement in the world is significant and encouraging.

NEUTRALITY MUST BE ENFORCED

The doctrine of strict neutrality in the instance of war between nations in any part of the world needs to be made an invariable feature of the policy of the United States, and all shipments of munitions and other goods to either of the belligerents should be officially forbidden, no matter how insistent the pleas of manufacturers and merchants who covet the opportunity to profit from the quarrel. In this manner, so far as this government is concerned, all the advantage of sanctions, the most powerful non-aggressive weapon yet discovered, can be applied in the effort to end the dispute. Just as any right minded citizen would use all his influence to stop a fight between two individuals, so public sentiment and united effort should interpose in all non-belligerent ways to put an end to international conflicts.

The conscription of men of the arms bearing age has long been the custom of governments, yielding precedence in honor only to those who volunteer at the call of the state. To any such mandate there should be added the conscription of property, so that old men who sit protected in life and possessions and who plan the conflicts of nations and the exemption of their own sons, will hesitate to send other men's sons to military service, mutilation and death. Universal conscription of life and property would go far to put an end to the futility and the tragedy of war.

THE CHURCH MUST REFUSE TO FIGHT

Public meetings in the interests of peace, such as those in process at the present time under the auspices of the Emergency Peace Campaign, ought to be held in every community by such groups as businessmen's clubs, labor organizations, farmers' guilds, women's circles, youth associations, colleges and universities, and most of all, the churches. It is a time for peace agitation in every city and town, so that the urgency of the situation may be brought directly to public attention, and the force of public opinion may be set in motion in the interest of peace. At such meetings the policy of the United States in regard to its military program should be discussed, including the reduction of army and navy to police status, such as is ample for community and coast protection in case of riot or other local disturbance; abandonment of the practice of sending United States troops to any other country under any pretext, such as has prevailed in the instances of Haiti, Nicaragua, China and

other portions of the world; the development of a sentiment favoring reciprocal trade agreements with all nations, and the right of all countries to access to the raw materials essential to their economic life on terms adjusted to friendly relations with their neighbors; the placing of the manufacture of munitions under government control, thus removing the motive of a private profit; the support of all peaceful types of international co-operation, such as the World Court, a League of Nations with proper program and limitations, and other forms of arbitration and conciliation.

Most of all, the church of God should be freed from all participation in the war system. Hitherto it has been counted as a willing ally of the state in the promotion of all its war program. From this obligation it is now demanding the right of withdrawal unless that program can be justified as not inconsistent with the ideals of Jesus Christ. It desires no involvement in the war machinery, and in an increasing number of its convocations it is asking the Federal Council of Churches to discontinue the practice of chaplain service for the army and navy under the authority of the war administration. It is prepared to furnish religious service to the troops on a voluntary basis, without cost to the government and without ranking status. This would relieve the church of the increasing sense of unrest under the present plan of allegiance to a war system, and of service under its authority. It is the conviction of a growing number of Christian leaders that a better type of chaplain service could thus be rendered the men in uniform, and the conscience of the church would be better satisfied.

AMERICA CALLED TO LEADERSHIP

In such efforts to rid the world of the war psychology and to insist that the practice of peace is consistent with national honor and the welfare of states, this nation of ours is set in the high place of leadership. The other peoples of the world recognize this fact, however unwillingly. Without our economic, commercial, cultural and moral co-operation they cannot prosper. They understand that we have the resources and the spirit which make us valuable friends or unconquerable foes. They prefer the former relationship, and would gladly accept the pattern of peace and good will which we can offer them if we are willing to lead in such a crusade. That is our mission and responsibility. We have no ambitions for territorial expansion. We are in fact giving over to independence island areas which we might hold if we chose. Some of our people have insisted that we ought to hold them in the interest of empire and patriotism. But we want no world empire, and "patriotism is not enough." There are higher values to be achieved through our co-operation and leadership, and world peace is the greatest of them. We hold in large measure the key to the realization of the Christmas hope for a warless world.

We are proud of our country and its place among the nations. We love the flag and all the ideals for which it stands. Great names and great memories belong to it. Our people are the most cosmopolitan and diverse to be found under any sky. The blood of all the nations flows commingled in our veins. To us has fallen this noble heritage of leadership in the arts and graces of civilization, and in the interpretation by word and life of the Christian faith. To vindicate that birthright, and to demonstrate that devotion at the Christmas season and through the tense times which will follow is our privilege and obligation. In the face of the evils which threaten our world, the most sinister of which is war, we summon the aid of our divine Ally, whose face through the centuries is set against the ills that afflict the earth, who knows that it is his to conquer and to rule, for he has seen Satan as lightning fall from heaven, and who declares with the confidence that he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, "I came not to bring peace on the earth, but a sword."

The Carpenter of Nazareth

By Henry Kendall Booth

And he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up . . . and when the Sabbath was come he began to teach in the synagogue . . . the men of Nazareth were struck with astonishment and said, Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary? Mark 6:1-3.

THE one supreme shrine of Christendom ought to be found within the little town of Nazareth, for there for thirty years dwelt the Christ, lifting his eyes unto the hills at sunrise and sunset, drinking a draught each day of the crystal clear water from the fountain that still stands in the center of the village. Here, then, is the place above all places on earth to which we should expect the devotion of Christian hearts to turn, and here we should expect to rise a great church and a magnificent shrine dedicated to the memory of him who forever has immortalized Nazareth.

Yet strangely enough no church of any consequence was ever built in Nazareth. The places of the birth and the death of Jesus are marked by the Church of the Nativity and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and to these through the centuries millions of pilgrim feet have journeyed and for their possession thousands of men crossed the seas in the Crusades to wrest them from the hand of the Saracen. Here in these two great shrines one finds the stones of the pavement worn smooth by the feet of pilgrims, and these sacred places of his birth and death are ever crowded with Christian pilgrims from the corners of the earth. But there is no shrine in Nazareth worthy of the name.

And in like manner the theology of the church has overlooked the significance and meaning of Nazareth. For the theologians of the centuries have debated and discussed the incarnation and the atonement, the coming of Jesus into the world as God and the death of Jesus upon the cross as God, but there is practically no recognition, so far as I know, anywhere in the theology of the centuries of those thirty years in Nazareth.

Sacred art has likewise left Nazareth in oblivion. We walk through the galleries of Europe today and all about us are hundreds of canvases by the greatest artists the world has known, depicting the birth of Jesus or the death of Jesus upon the cross, but where in any gallery

will you find any picture of the Master as he lived in Nazareth?

And in this hymnal that we use every Sunday, in which there is gathered the accumulated devotion of Christian hearts in song and the heritage of the hymns of the church from the days of John of Damascus to the present hour—where in this hymnal or any other will you find any praise of Nazareth? We bow in adoration before the Cradle and the Cross and sing songs of love and worship to him there, but there is practically no mention in the theology or art or devotion or music of the Christian church through the centuries of the place where he spent thirty years.

That fact is symptomatic and typical of the greater fact which it expresses and exemplifies, the almost total neglect of the life of Jesus. Volumes upon volumes, whole libraries, have been written about the birth and death of Jesus, and particularly upon the cross has focused the thought of centuries of Christianity. But until in the middle of the nineteenth century when a French savant and a German philosopher wrote two Lives of Jesus, not one Life of Christ had ever been written since John laid down his pen in Ephesus, and the thought of the Christian church has not until very recently, only within the last half century, focused itself at all upon the life of Christ.

We have meditated upon both his birth and his death because we thought that in them we saw the miraculous, and the supernatural and the transcendent touched us there; and yet the greatest miracle of all the ages was wrought in Nazareth, for the greatest miracle that Jesus presents to the world is not a miraculous birth or supernatural death but the absolutely perfect character that was wrought out in those thirty years within the encircling hills of that Galilean hill town.

WHY WAS JESUS "SHUT AWAY"?

The little town of Nazareth lies in a cuplike hollow of the Galilean hills, raised slightly above the plain of Esdraelon, a little shut away from the great main highway of the ages that runs from Damascus down to Egypt, a place inconspicuous in history, scarcely mentioned in the Scriptures or even in the Jewish annals, a place rather obscure, not in the center and focus of human life through the ages. And one immediately asks the question as one confronts the fact that the training of Jesus for his work, the unfolding of that perfect life, the stupendous miracle of the creation of that character took place in this Galilean hill town—Why? Why did not Jesus live under the shadow of the Acropolis and walk past the Erechtheum and the Theseum and the Parthenon and view the glories and splendors of Greek art and architecture or sit in Athens' amphitheater and listen to the plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles and Euripides? Or why was not Jesus born within the focus and center of the great empire of his day; why did he not walk daily through the Forum at Rome and view the magnificence and splendor in which all the power of that age was focused and realized; and listen to the great orators and great statesmen and see the emperor go by in his golden palanquin and share in the proud sense that he was a citizen of the greatest city in the world? Or why was he not born in Alexandria, for there we find the meeting-place through the ages of the East and the West, where the great philosophies of the ancient world had their birth and where the shadows of the past and the glories of the future have always mingled? Why did he not sit under the shadow of the Pyramids with the hoary wealth of culture behind him and live in teeming, busy, bustling Alexandria? Why did God shut him away for thirty years in this little hill town of Galilee?

And the answer comes quick and sure. It is clear as we face the fact that the answer lies implicit within it. It was because God wishes us to understand and to learn the lesson once and for all that character does not depend upon circumstances, and that nothing can limit and confine the greatness of a soul. Personal greatness is from within and not without. It does not require a great theater of action for a man to be great, for out of the villages and the countrysides of the ages, out of the obscure and forgotten places of the earth have come all the greatest souls of the world; and Jesus was no exception to this divine rule. For you and I are not limited by our surroundings. Let none of us complain because he lives in a Nazareth. We can rise up out beyond all the cribbed and cabined environment in which we are placed, our souls can be freed as was the soul of the Master to rise out of a small, obscure town to become the Savior of the world. He walks out of Nazareth when history opens and becomes the great actor on the stage of human life; he walks out of Nazareth, Master, Teacher, Savior, Lord of mankind.

Let us go back and walk with Jesus in Nazareth and see how he used that environment and how he wrought it into the fabric of his own character and took the elements and transmuted them into his own personality. And as we go back thus to walk with him this morning, we shall find there are five elements of that experience that are wrought into his character and life that find expression in his teaching and his words and in his deeds. They are the home, the church, the market place, the workshop and the hilltop.

I

Jesus was born in a Jewish home. Not a house—it was something more that that—it was a home of piety and reverence and love in which he lived in Nazareth. Very simple and very crude were the surroundings of the Master. The houses in Nazareth today are just as they have been through the centuries, and were he to go back and walk through Nazareth today he would find all about him the same homes in which he lived as a boy, as a youth, and as a man. One sees a square house of rough hewn stone, with one or two small windows and a large door; two levels as one steps within, the higher level where lived the family and the lower level for the animals. There was no furniture save possibly a low table about which the family sat as they ate; no chairs or couches; nothing of elegance or luxury or beauty, but the simple, hard-packed dirt floor upon which the family lived, ate and slept; simple clothing and simpler food; a life of poverty and struggle, a life crude indeed in its material surroundings. That was the kind of home that Jesus knew.

It was a home in which Jesus not only lived with his

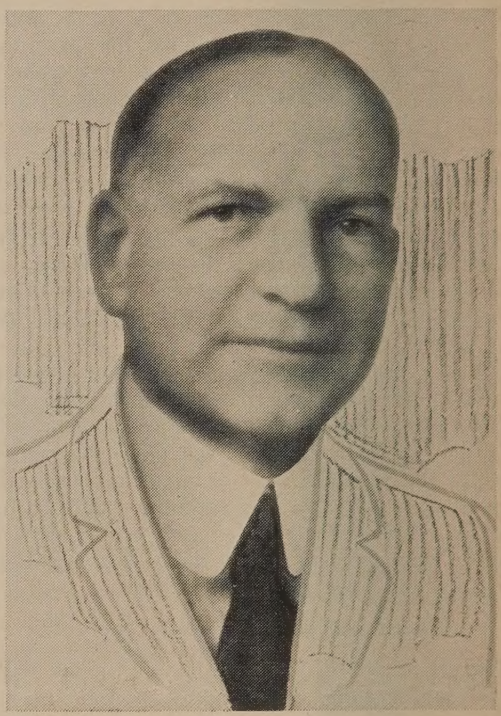
mother and father but with his younger brothers and sisters; there were four brothers and at least two sisters. Not only so, but we recognize the fact at once that Jesus was the oldest of the family and tradition says that his father died in Jesus' early youth, so Jesus became the sole support of the family, for by Jewish custom the oldest son became the head of the household. He thus became to his mother a comforter and counselor. To him came the other children as they grew, and he stanched their tears and comforted them in their sorrows and settled their childish quarrels. Is it too much to believe that he also told them stories? For when he comes upon the scene of history he spoke the most marvelous parable —and a parable is simply a story which cannot be improved upon by the cleverest word artists today. Simple, concrete, clear, brilliantly beautiful, they are the most wondrous pieces of literature we know. Jesus did not suddenly in his manhood begin telling stories then and there. There lies behind such artistry years of practice.

Moreover through his mother there had come into his life at the very dawn of his life the vision of the divine, when he knelt at his mother's knee and repeated the Shema: "The Lord thy God is one and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy strength and all thy mind." And he could look up into her eyes and see God through her infinite love. She was a true mother. For there are two kinds of mothers in the world, you know: the mother who tries to shield her son from every sorrow and take away from him every difficulty and smooth his path, that unwise and foolish mother who makes a spoiled and foolish man. But the other kind of mother trains her child from his earliest days to face conflicts and bear burdens and meet hardships and difficulties. And so at her knee and within the circle of that pious home he learned first about God.

While his father Joseph stands in the dim background of the gospel story, yet we cannot forget that the great Teacher of life and history told us to call God "Our Father," and I cannot but believe that he found in his own human father so chivalrous, so kind, so gentle, so deeply spiritual, a prototype and figure of that Divine Father that he came later to know so well. There then in that home, that home of love, that home of tenderness, that home of mutual helpfulness and self-sacrifice, Jesus learned the deepest lessons that life can teach us. And he came out of that Nazareth life and out of that home in that little hill town to leave with us his teaching on the holiness of human love. The sanctifying and purifying beauty of that relation, of heart with heart and life with life, that he had known in all its beauty in that home in Nazareth, he leaves with us as his heritage from that experience.

II

Then on the Sabbath day the steps of Jesus were turned with those of his fellow countrymen to the synagogue. As a boy he sat on the back seats with the other lads. He heard the majestic sentences of the old Psalms and Isaiah, and joined in the singing of the hymns and Psalms. In his soul there came to its perfect flower that religious genius which was characteristic of the Jew through all the ages, for everything to the Jew was centered and focused upon religion. All his art was religious, all his poetry was religious, all his music was religious. Then as he grew to youth and young manhood he sat at the feet of the rabbi with the other boys of the village and there on the sand of the floor were written out with a stick by the teacher the great and simple texts and passages of the Old Testament to be learned over and over again, memorizing page after page, chapter after chapter, until as Jesus steps out on the scene of history we find him absolute master of the Scriptures of his race and able to gather up into one telling sentence all that had been written in the literature of his people: "The first commandment is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God; and the second, Love thy neighbor as thyself. In these two words are gathered up all the law and the prophets."



Henry Kendall Booth

III

But the most enduring lessons Jesus learned, after all, in the market place. Here was the center and focus of oriental life then and now. Go to Damascus, Jerusalem, any of the cities of the orient today and you will find that the busy life of the towns and cities centers in the market place. Here goes on the eternal din of bargaining and traffic, the delight of the east in the long slow controversies and bandying of words back and forth, proceeding into such a passionate battle that you expect the traders to come to blows, and ending at last in a bargain.

Now Nazareth in Jesus' time was no such remote and secluded place as we have thought it. It was a few miles off the main highway of commerce to be sure, but it was nevertheless a busy town, for into its market place poured all the races of that day. Jesus there saw the

people of the world; he heard every language, Jewish, Greek, Roman, Arabian, Syrian, from the far corners of the earth; they brought goods from all the Mediterranean world to be sold there.

Into this market place Jesus must have gone again and again, and listened to what went on. He heard the gossip of the market place, the story of the latest exactions of taxes, the last cruel edict of the Roman governor. He saw eyes flash and heard mutterings in beards as the publican went by and they called him traitor and spat after him. He heard also the gossip about persons and individuals, as over in a corner a little knot of men gathered together and discussed the latest scandal with smacking of lips over some salacious detail—the same old eternal triangle of the ages. Jesus listened and his heart recoiled from it all. Perhaps the reason that he said such stringent things regarding the use of words was because of the tales of lust that he heard in the market place of Nazareth.

He listened to the bargaining of the traders, and heard men who would swear by heaven and earth and by God himself that this or that statement was true, and Jesus' heart recoiled that for the sake of a petty bargain these men would blaspheme the name of God; so he said to us and to his disciples: "Do not interpolate your words with oaths by this or that, but let your speech be yea, yea, and nay, nay; and let your word be as good as your bond."

IV

Then Jesus at his father's death took up his father's trade, according to Jewish custom, and as the text of the morning makes plain, was a carpenter. His tools were the saw, the chisel, the plane and hammer, and to him fell the tasks that would fall to the village carpenters of his day, to construct the foundations of the houses and make simple furniture and tables; and most important of all was the fashioning of agricultural implements, the simple plow with its single handle, and the yokes that fell on the necks of the patient oxen. And later he could say to his fellow men that he had made those yokes so well, so carefully fitted to the necks of the patient beasts that they would not gall them, and he was able to make yokes for the souls of men equally comfortable and easy. And the whole character of his teaching is that of one who had learned by patient construction of this, that, and the other element of his trade how human life likewise must be carefully built upon sure foundations, how it will not do to use green timber because it will warp, but the house must be built upon solid, secure foundations if we expect it to stand.

But the most important fact of all lies not in these details, but in the truth that is revealed by Jesus as he stands there at the carpenter bench—that toil itself is sacred; for was not Jesus being prepared in those long hot days in the carpenter shop for his ministry, and was not he just as much the Son of God as he stands there before us with his hammer and plane as when he hung upon the cross or was transfigured on the mount or when he healed the sick?

So he left to us that great teaching about the dignity and beauty of work that we can well take to our hearts and lives today.

V

When his work was done and the end of the day came, we may be absolutely sure that Jesus more than once, perhaps almost every night, climbed the long winding hillside that takes one in about ten minutes walk to the summit of the hills about Nazareth. For, as I have already said, Nazareth lies in a cuplike hollow of the hills and you cannot see out from it. But if you climb its hill you have at your feet a panorama of all Palestine.

Let us stand with Jesus for a moment, and what do we see? Way off to the westward stretches the plain of Esdraelon, and the great promontory of Carmel standing against the western sky, and beyond is the blue of the Mediterranean and the white sand of the Bay of Acre. Off to the eastward lay the long ribbon of the Jordan valley and beyond the blue hills of Moab. To the southward across the great plain of Esdraelon lie Mount Gilboa and Little Hermon and beyond the valleys of Samaria; and beyond on the horizon in the distance are the hills of Judea and the mountains about Jerusalem. To the north, seemingly almost within reach, viewing it as he must have many times, cobalt blue against the wintry sky or glimmering in the moonlight or shimmering through the heat haze of summer, was the majestic snow-clad summit of Mt. Hermon and its encircling mountains. At his feet lay all Palestine.

But this was more to Jesus than an outlook and a landscape; it was a mosaic of memories, for everywhere he looked he saw that which recalled the heroes and martyrs of his race.

Above him was the blue of the Syrian sky; all about him were the sights and sounds of nature. How he loved it all! The birds of the field; the little brown sparrows, seemingly worthless, yet none beyond the Father's care; the hen partridge gathering under her wing the sooty raven; the great cranes as they passed high above him on their way to the Dead sea. How he loved them, the birds of the air, and he was conscious that he himself had nowhere to lay his head. And below at his feet was a spangled carpet of flowers, the lilies of the field (scarlet anemones), the lupines, the green sweep of the long hillside where he could hear the wind as it rustled the trees and the murmur of the reeds by the river bank, the sunrise and sunset, the procession of the seasons. He shared in all the sights and sounds of nature. But behind them he saw something that other men did not see. He felt they were the garment of God and that everything in nature spoke of God, everything in nature revealed God. So there we can think of Jesus at nightfall; as the shadows enveloped the sleeping village at his feet, sitting there through the long night watches, alone with his God; and the most sacred spot in all Palestine is that hilltop that was Jesus' house of prayer. Here he found the divine drawing nigh to him and here he entered into communion with his Father and God.

Here we find born in his heart, to be carried through all his life and teachings, that vision of God in daily life and experience, in every sight and sound of nature, in every contact with men. That is the mainspring of his ministry. That is what gives his words charm and beauty, that is what makes Jesus immortal—because he was able to translate human life and language into the

divine; because, indeed, he was able to see God in everything.

And so, you and I look back this morning as that Carpenter of Nazareth stands in the doorway of his shop, looking out with sane and searching eyes upon us all; this man among men, who found in the life of that little village, in the confines and limitations that were set about his life, possibilities in his home, in his church, his shop, in the market place, on the hilltop for the development within his soul of that perfect character with which he comes out of Nazareth.

The Giver of Abundant Life

By Andreas Bard

I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10.

HERE is a statement so clear that argument cannot obscure it. The Master defines his mission. He came to bring life. Whatever else he may have accomplished, this is his goal. When he founds his church, reveals the Father, inspires his hearers, dies for the truth, he is firm in this purpose, that we "might have life." Plato creates philosophy. Mohammed writes a creed. Buddha teaches asceticism. Jesus gives life.

Perhaps we would have preferred a clear-cut statement of theology. What if Christ had revealed the principle of electricity or the law of gravitation or the science of telepathy? Some skeptics have suggested such a possibility. Evidently they are not impressed with the treasure he mentions: "abundant life."

Yet how few of us know what life really is? We speak of the life of a mollusk and we speak of the life of a Shakespeare. But what an abyss between the two, bridged over by that adjustable and misleading word, life! The jellyfish wiggles. The animal exists. Man lives. Give me a thousand people and I will give you a thousand shades and grades of life. What a toboggan slide from Prospero to Caliban, from McKinley to his assassin, from John Huss to the peasant who kindled the fagot! Yet they all "lived" and fell heir to the claims of humanity.

Shakespeare evidently resents the lack of discrimination when he exclaims: "What is a man, if the chief market of his soul is but to feed and sleep?" A beast! But the millions who perish in darkest Africa, in the slums of our large cities, in mental dungeons and aimless strife, are nothing else. Mere breathing is not life. A tool-using animal is not a human being.

MOST MEN DIE WITHOUT HAVING LIVED

There are millions who will not get an idea in their head unless it is put there by some surgical operation; who view love with the cynical grin of an Ibsen, who care not "whether the pigs eat the dogs or the dogs the pigs"; who with Omar Khayyam scoff at ideals and "resign tomorrow's tangles to the winds." Seeing these millions to whom thought, love and aspiration are realms unknown, we are tempted to agree with Voltaire that "most men die without having lived!"

Life is correspondence with environment. The eye is related to the light, the ear to the sound. The blind person is born without one possibility for life, the deaf without another. Fully developed man has more life than any other creature, because of his larger environment. The air is his, for he can inhale it; the fruit is his, for he can eat it; the fountain is his, for he can quench his thirst; the trees are his, for he enjoys their shade; the sun is his, for he can bask in its warmth. But most of this he has in common with the beast. If that were all, humanity would be unknown. Only after we enter into the castle of the soul with its mysterious chambers, its secret recesses, its hidden dungeons where the passions slumber; its lofty watch-towers facing toward the sunrise; I say, only then we notice the world-wide difference between man and man, between the life unmatured and the life abundant!

Let a number of people give their impressions of nature and you will understand that all of us have different spheres of life. Goethe's eye is very clear. He looks at flower and leaf and then detects that the leaf is mother to the flower. Wordsworth, less scientific, but equally appreciative, confesses: "To me the meanest flower that blows gives thoughts which often lie too deep for tears." In nature Bryant discovered "Thanatopsis," Shelley his "Skylark," Emerson the "Rhodora." They had eyes that saw and ears that heard. But others there are who find in the sheltering palms naught save so many thousand feet of lumber, to whom the fairest garden is but a piece of real estate, and a bed of roses but a patch not yet made use of for potatoes. Some souls have relation to art, some to science, some to business and a few choice spirits to them all. Such spirits have abundant life.

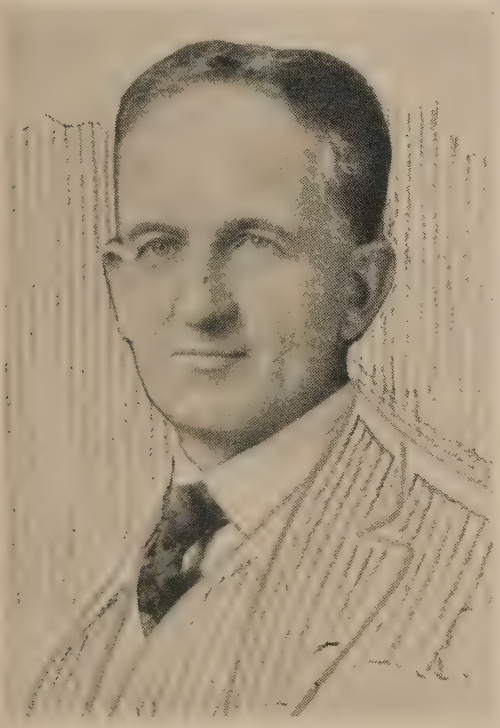
WHAT CHRIST BROUGHT TO LIGHT

Put a one-idea man into a library and he will see naught but reams of rubbish. Shakespeare may be there, but he cannot understand him. The Bible may be there, but he has no way of seeing the beauty of the twenty-third Psalm, the grandeur of the book of Job. Put a literary man in his place and the tomb becomes a paradise. The books seem like old friends and speak to him in diverse tongues. There he listens to the story of Margaret's love, follows Cordelia to the heath and discerns with rapture Ophelia's song. He asks with Hamlet the question of questions and with Macbeth he feels the spur of ambition and the fangs of remorse. His mind stands in relation to whatever there is of weal and woe, of tear and smile, of glory and shame. His soul is an aeolian harp that responds to all that stirs the heart of humanity. Such a man has abundant life, because his environment is vast as the sea.

Christ came that we might have life and have it "more abundantly." In some respects this was unnecessary. Long since the world had learned to enrich its resources. Art spoke to them from the sculpture of Phidias, poetry from the songs of Homer, eloquence from the lips of Demosthenes. Culture had reached its zenith. Civilization was highly advanced. What then was the contribution of Jesus, the life that he promised?

He established our relationship to the three greatest realities—Man, God and Immortality.

The pearl which Christ found buried in the depth of antiquity, the diamond which he unearthed from the dark mine of Roman militarism and Jewish Pharisaism, it was no more nor less than the human soul. He discovered man. In his days there were Grecians and Scythians and Romans and Jews. But man was unknown. The Nazarene, standing before Pilate, forgot the governor and appealed to the man behind the mask. Facing the penitent Magdalene, he forgot the prostitute and discovered the woman. Pilate on the height; Mary in the depth. The world would separate them and place



ANDREAS BARD

between them a deep gulf. Christ unites them. They are essentially alike. Both sinners, both human, both made in the image of God. This thought, now trite and familiar, was then akin to a revolution. Jews were considered slaves. Barbarians served as gladiators. Who is this that claims for them a soul as glorious as that of the Caesars?

Thus, by discovering man, Christ enriched life beyond measure. From now on, every mother who presses her babe to her bosom shall know that this little lump of flesh, this creature so tiny, is not born to be trampled upon by an arrogant society, but that under the physical shell is hidden a spirit divine. From now on, human life shall be held sacred and the slaughter of men considered fratricide. From now on, woman ceases to be an inferior creature. She is made the equal of man, a child of God. So startling was this discovery, so revolutionizing this thought, that it has taken centuries for the world to realize its import. Even Christian nations were slow to adopt it. Their history is written with blood, their heroes appear as tyrants. And yet not untrue it is that the watchwords of the French Revolution, "Equality, Liberty, Fraternity," were written first over the cross of Golgotha.

This discovery of Christ was all the more amazing because it seemed disproved by his own experience. Did humanity ever appear more brutal than during the life of the loving Jesus? The mob was fickle, the Pharisees hypocritical, the people utterly ignorant. Of the twelve disciples one betrayed, the other denied his Master. All of them fled in the hour of darkness. Was this race worth living, worth dying for? Frederick the Great used to speak of the "damned race." But never did Jesus falter. Left utterly alone, he chose to die for them. Deserted on the cross, he utters for them his sublimest prayer.

THE SOUL'S POSSIBILITIES

And indeed, his faith did not fail him. For though he was once betrayed and denied and deserted, he is now crowned king of kings. Before him they kneel—high and low, emperor and beggar, scholar and peasant. His appeal to the nobler side of man, though hushed for a time, has burst forth into endless hosannahs. The human soul has discerned the truth and found it divine. In this there is inspiration. Call not man "the quintessence of dust." Forget his baseness. Keep your eye from the mire. Behold the stars, the untold treasures of the soul. What a rise this is, from a protoplasm to Plato! Today a babe—tomorrow a Shakespeare! Today a feeble cry—tomorrow the voice of a Luther! Today a lip on a mother's breast—tomorrow the eloquence of a Paul! Thus a few years can raise man from nothingness to grandeur, from a cradle to Olympus, from dust to divinity. And has ever a life exhausted the possibilities of the soul? God will allow no talent to perish. To every seed he will give a plant, to every acorn an oak. And like an eternal dawn after a brief twilight appears eternity with its promises of endless progress, of revelations which "eye hath not seen and ear hath not heard." In discovering man Christ has enriched our lives "abundantly."

Christ also discovered nature. Since time immemorial men had seen earth and sky and sea. The voice of the ninetieth Psalm is gloomy and sad, the observations of Job lead to despair. But when Jesus considers the lilies of the field, the mustard seed or the fig tree, he reveals them as symbols of a Father's care. Looking up to the starry firmament, he speaks of the "many mansions"; looking down upon the work of the sower, he recognizes the truth of immortality. What startling thought is this—a loving God! Heretofore people had seen him only amid the lightnings of Mount Sinai, they had trembled in his presence. But suddenly the veil is lifted by the tender hand of the Christ and we see instead a Father waiting for the return of his erring son and running to meet him as he sees him "yet afar off."

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CALVARY

But will not facts disprove this theory? Are the sorrows of earth compatible with such a belief? "God is either cruel or blind," exclaims de Maupassant. But Jesus taught otherwise. Even when the shadows of the

cross fell athwart his path, even when amid the agony in the garden his sweat was like drops of blood, even when a crown of thorns was placed upon his wounded brow, he did not waver. Under the clouds of Calvary, while thunders rent the air and lightnings crossed the horizon, while the earth quaked and the guards trembled, his soul rises sunward, Godward: "Father, into thine hands I commend my spirit." I have heard skeptics arguing against the love of God, I have heard discussions about the cruelty of fate, but in the presence of the Man of Sorrows we stand uncovered. If he could bear his cross and remain firm, what dare we say?

JESUS' FAITH PROVED BY FACTS

And now, listen: The faith of Jesus is proved by facts. In the light of events we can see that his cross has become a crown, that his death has become our life, that Golgotha is the rock of salvation. God is love, even if he fails to respond to the prayer of Gethsemane. His thoughts are above ours as the heavens are above the earth. "I would go no further," Parmenio suggested to Alexander. "Neither would I," replied the great general, "if I were Parmenio." We would change the universe, no doubt. But I say with Browning: "God's in his heaven, all's well with the world." Oh the abundance of life, the glorious inspiration in this mighty discovery "Our Father"!

Again Jesus gave us the thought of eternal life. Amid the threatening clouds of death, he consoles his disciples; only "a little while and ye shall see me. I go to the Father." Here opens an entirely new world. The ancients had spoken of Hades, but they trembled at the thought of it. The Jews had some nebulous notion of the beyond. But here was calm assurance. Only a step from time to eternity. It is merely the return to the Father from whom we came. What an abundance of thought and inspiration has sprung from this belief! It has sustained martyrs, made heroes, aroused philosophy, strengthened faith.

What is our failure here but a triumph's evidence
For the fulness of days? Have we withered or agonized?
Why else was the pause prolonged but that singing might issue hence?
Why rushed the discords in but that harmony should be prized?
Each sufferer has his say, his scheme of weal and woe,
But God has a few of us whom he whispers in the ear!

The Gift of Gifts

PRAY that our very Gift of Gifts might be
Amongst us yet; as once in Galilee!
Talking of lilies, and of birds o'erhead,
Of little children, and our daily bread—
To us, His humble fisher-folk! make plain
The shining wonder of Himself again,
That we may touch the seamless garment's rim
And be made whole, through the dear grace of Him!
Across the centuries that seem so far
How close the Christ-Child comes! how near, the Star!

LAURA SIMMONS.

The Exaltation of Christ

By FREDERICK W. NORWOOD

When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men . . . and he gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Ephesians 4:8.

THE more I consider the four gospels—and I have been considering them for many years—the more I stand in amazement before them. They constitute the greatest biography that has ever been written, but, more than that, they have laid the foundations of the greatest religion the world has ever known.

Yet I can never feel that the men who wrote the gospels were in any way great geniuses. I would never think of setting them beside Shakespeare or Goethe as creative literary masters. It is not their intrinsic power which has lifted them higher than Shakespeare or Goethe, or anybody else has ever been. The secret, of course, lies in the personality about whom they are writing. Indeed I feel that none but essentially simple men could ever have written those gospels. Had they used their inventive powers, they would have spoiled the story. Had they rationalized or philosophized about the life of which they were speaking, they would have ruined the story. They were essentially simple men, and the greatness of their work lies not in themselves, but in him of whom they were writing.

Consider the life of Jesus. There has never been another life like it. The men who told the story of Jesus in these four gospels had virtually to tell of three distinct personalities, or at least three distinct phases of one personality.

A HUMAN LIFE

They had first to tell the story of a human life—of a man who lived among other men, the outward circumstances of whose life were exceedingly simple and by no means obscure. He was born in Bethlehem; he was brought up in Nazareth; he was the son of a carpenter; he lived for the most part in a little cottage that was almost open to the street in a gossipy little town; and for the rest he was a wonderful preacher, until he died a felon's death on a cross. They had to tell that story.

After the resurrection they had to tell the story of a life that was still on earth, but that was unearthly and mystical—a life such as had not been lived before, and for the description of which they had no guidance, no precedent. And finally, after the ascension, they had to speak of one who was no longer of the earth, but was identified with the very life of God.

Shakespeare could not have done it, and Goethe could not have done it; and nobody could have invented it, especially as in the midst of it all the story is coherent and convincing. Only essentially simple men, swayed by a power they could not resist, and telling the truth as they were sure of it, could have done this most marvelous thing.

Now, you will of course reflect that the first phase of

the life of Jesus of which I have spoken forms by far the longest part of the story. For the most part they told the life of the wonderful preacher of Galilee. In the second part of the story they were strangely reticent; and in the third part they were almost miraculously reticent. Just one brief sentence or two and the thing is told as they knew it; and yet it is the third part of the story that did the miracles, that created the church and that is still today the life of the church.

There is no doubt that the early disciples of Jesus were tremendously influenced by his life. The conviction grew upon them as the days passed by that there was something unique and divine about his life; but that

FREDERICK W. NORWOOD

did not change them very much. It put many thoughts into their minds, it influenced their motives and their characters a great deal, but it did not radically change them. Neither did the experiences with the risen Christ change them much. They were persuaded that he was alive, but that did not create the church. It did not even make them confident. They seemed to have been haunted by a sense of the unusual; they feared that some change would come, that at any moment they might lose him just as quickly as they had found him again.

AFTER THE ASCENSION

But when what we call the ascension had taken place they became marvelously changed. They were now at peace. They were assured that he was beyond the realm of change, that there was something permanent and sure and divine about the things that he had taught them, and they themselves began to become new men, full of strength and power and faith and enterprise.

Really, the tremendous part of the story is the part they scarcely tell. All they say is something like this: "He was parted from them and a cloud received him out of their sight." There is a miracle of reticence as well as a miracle of loquacity. Ordinary men could never have stopped there. They would have wanted to express their beliefs, to describe the thing they were trying to tell of; they would have wanted to rationalize or philosophize about it. These men did not. They left it alone. But all the same the experience was marvelous; it was transforming, it was the secret of the new religion, it was the beginning of the conquest of the world.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ASCENSION

There is something amazing here. All ordinary categories of criticism break down. I have read hundreds of books, as you have; hundreds of biographies of all kinds of extraordinary people; and have loved to ponder over them, analyze them, try to get behind them; but there is something here that is different.

For my own part, I am not greatly moved by the story of the ascension as such. Merely to be assured that our Lord's body was levitated and rose above the earth and finally disappeared from sight suggests to me all manner of intellectual problems; but what is worse, it leaves me emotionally cold.

I cannot help seeing that Jesus himself expected something wonderful to happen. He was perfectly sure that after his passion he would be exalted; that he would have greater sway than ever over the hearts of men all through the ages. But he never described what was going to happen to him, and I imagine that the last thing he would have stressed would have been the levitation of his body. Not that. I feel here that there is something behind the fact that nobody knew how to describe, but that unless that something had been there, we would not be here today. There never would have been a Christian religion, and Christ never would have been what he has been in the hearts and lives of men.

Whatever happened, the essence of it was this, that the values of Christ were lifted into the realm of the eternal, and men now believed that those values were according to the will of God, that they could be sought after and claimed and used.

THE SIMPLE VIRTUES ARE DIVINE

What happened at the beginning of our era was that the simple virtues were believed to be divine: they became dynamic, swayed men's lives, convinced their judgment, set their hearts aflame, sent them all over the world to proclaim the simple virtues in the name of Christ.

Here we are today amidst this complex civilization of ours, in which we certainly do not lack for experts, but in which we are being progressively driven by the force of events to an acknowledgment that the one thing that is wrong with us, and the only thing that is fundamentally wrong, is that we do not know how to practice the simple virtues. The fact is that we do not really believe they are divine; we do not even believe they pay; and if something could happen to us in our era which would put these simple virtues of truth and honor and fair dealing on the throne, you would not want a new religion and you would not want a new world.

Our trouble is not that we do not know the truth:

it is that we have not power to do the truth, or at any rate we do not use the power we have at our disposal.

The main thing that happened at the beginning of the Christian era was not that a dead man came to life again, in the sense that only his body was levitated and ascended into heaven and disappeared behind a cloud. There was something there that was real and true, but that description of it is not enough. What happened was that, by the mercy of God and by the trust of this dynamic life, these values were enthroned in men's hearts, and they went out in the power of them and created a new world.

Paul, I think, gets nearest to the mystery of the explanation of the ascension in these words that I am using, though even here, as you observe, he is only quoting from one of the ancient psalms. As to that, the really essential thing, of course, is not to say something new, but to say something true. Paul picks up the word of the forgotten psalmist and, applying it to Christ, says: "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men . . . and he gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers."

CHRIST'S "GIFTS" TO HIS DISCIPLES

When you turn the pages of the New Testament you perceive that that is exactly what happened among the immediate followers of Jesus. They were captives, they were held in bondage to their old racial traditions and conventions, their narrownesses and shibboleths; but they became captives to the risen Christ, and their captivity to Christ broke their captivity to Jewish exclusiveness. He gave gifts unto them. What manner of gifts did Christ give to his disciples? Certainly not gifts of treasure, wealth and rank, and all that kind of thing; for did he not call them to carry their cross? But he gave them gifts which released their own gifts; and these men, who during the days of his flesh had been virtually subservient to him rather than living in the strength of their own personality, went out to believe and blunder —but to conquer!

Gifts are very futile things, really. There is no value in a gift unless there is something within a man that makes the gift appropriate. It is no use giving to me, for instance, the crown jewels, which, if I remember rightly, are in the Tower of London. It would be of no use offering them to me. What could I do with them? Their only value to me would be to destroy them, melt down the gold, sell the stones, or something of that sort. Even money can only be a real gift when it can be translated into values that correspond with a man's own inward life. Translate them into power, or self-expression, or security, and your money may then be a gift; but, if they cannot be translated in that way, what good are they? But give to a man, if you can, power, self-expression, a sense of security, and you have given him money values. Christ did not give his servants money values, worldly values; but he released them, he set them free, he made dwarfs to become giants, he made timid men to become brave, he made stammering men to become eloquent, he made them apostles, prophets, pastors and teachers. That is what he did with his immediate disciples. That is what he has been doing all down the centuries, and that is what he is doing yet; and that is the proof of his ascension and the proof of his divinity—his gifts. If I did not believe that he does that, or that in some measure he has done it even for me, I would have nothing to preach about. I could probably preach very decent essays, expressed perhaps in much better phraseology than that which I am using now; but I would not really have anything to proclaim if I did not believe, with an assurance that amounts to positive conviction and actual knowledge, that this Christ can set men free, can make them captive to the holy, or break the captivity of the law; that this Christ can find men's gifts, can bring them out, enlarge them and make them worth while; that this Christ can still equip men and women for all the manifold activities of the spiritual life.

WANTED—ECONOMIC SHEPHERDS

When St. Paul drew up his list of the kind of servants Christ created, I think he was thinking rather in ecclesiastical terms—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. There will always be a need for them; but I never could see for myself that they constitute a class or caste or clique; and I never could see for myself that a man might not be a real apostle and yet be engaged in some secular form of work; or that a man might not really be a pastor without buttoning his collar at the back.

A pastor is a shepherd. Would to God that there might be some shepherds among the economists; shepherds of the people who look out upon the hungry flocks wandering hither and thither as though they had lost the way to the fold; and who think more of bringing them home into the fold, and releasing them to the pasture, than they think of sectional or national advantage.

What we are wanting at this critical juncture is not an influx of bishops, but an influx of economists whose lives are inspired by the spirit of Christ. Such men would be in the real succession—they belong to the kingdom. I do not want you to get into the way of thinking that men can only be dedicated to God by being drawn out from the ordinary rank and file of life and dedicated to some special form of what we call religious service.

EFFECTIVE PREACHING

I would rather know, more than anything else I can immediately think of, that through the preaching of the word in this place men and women have been encouraged to believe in the living Christ and in the definite, divine authority of those simple virtues that belong to him; in his power to set men and women free from crippling captivities; in his capacity to quicken and enlarge their native gifts, and indeed to add to them so richly as that they should seem new gifts; and, in the propulsive power of his life, to send them here, there and everywhere, into all manner of ranks of life, and into all manner and varieties of service, to be shepherds, prophets, apostles in the name of the risen Christ.

That is what we are meeting for here and now; and that is the kind of thing that can happen here and now to any man or woman who is but willing to have it happen.

The Meaning of Christmas

By James E. Freeman

POSSIBLY the present more than any other period in history discloses greater need for a recognition of that which Christmas emphasizes and affirms. The whole world is in process of mighty and far-reaching changes. Our leaders and statesmen are themselves bewildered and embarrassed in the face of events so momentous and portentous and their genius is wholly incapable of measuring their import and dealing adequately with their problems. So engrossed are they in questions that concern world trade and finance that they are losing sight of those deeper and more enduring values that are essentially related to the world's order and peace. The burdening debts, the dire consequence of a titanic struggle, the dislocation of trade and industry, the nice adjustments of international problems—the magnitude of all these holds our vision with such rapt and fixed attention that we are in danger of neglecting our souls and forfeiting both our security and our peace. To be materially rich and spiritually bankrupt involves us in perils that neither our strong defenses nor our boasted genius can resist and withstand.

Nothing is more conspicuous in our present situation than the emphasis we are placing upon restored order through the stabilizing of material values. What we produce, what we sell, what we buy, what we enjoy, these occupy at once our interest and our consuming ambition. We magnify everything except the things of the spirit. We of the Western world are facing the days of our severest testing. Our trust in our institutions is being shaken and our confidence is being displaced by fear. Our garnered grapes have soured and are bitter to the taste. Accumulated wealth has proved a broken reed and its possessors have lost their sense of God-dependence. Luxuries have robbed us of our moral worth and stamina and left us feeble to resist forces that are muttering their maledictions upon our highly organized institutions.

CHRISTMAS AND THE HOME

However large the problems may be that burden our minds, we dare not be forgetful of those finer lessons that past experience has taught us. It is quite possible that we might so reorder and readjust our relations as to ensure to ourselves those benefits and privileges that bring in their train the satisfaction of our desires and expectations. It might be that through pacts and agreements we should once again find the world peaceful and orderly, but even these conditions could not guarantee to us and those that are to follow after, those rich gifts and blessings that proceed from a stabilized character grounded in Christian faith and practice.

Christmas day is, in a very peculiar sense, a home day, and home means to us the place in which all that is finest and noblest in human nature has its genesis and development. Factories and marts of trade afford us opportunity for the expression of our genius as craftsmen and traders; our homes are more than castles to safeguard us from the ills and misfortunes of the outer world—they are the places in which we generate those rich and strong qualities that alone maintain and strengthen the corporate life of society and the state. Once the sanctity of the home is invaded, once its virtue is impaired or its escutcheon tarnished, and our boasted pride in our corporate institutions fails us, and the seeming stability of the state furnishes no guarantee of our permanence. Disquietude and unrest in our homes, abandoned disciplines and the neglect of those virtues that contribute to wholesomeness of character, as expressed in human relationships, are inevitably reflected in the corporate life of society, commerce and the state. Our opulence is no guarantee to either our virtue or our integrity. Today

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conditions exist in home life that disturb its tranquillity and give occasion for alarm. In the home we are dealing with the springs of our life, those creative sources at which we generate our virtues or our vices. If the stream be sullied and uncertain at its source, it produces conditions that all our wit and wisdom cannot correct in the broader fields of our activities.

There are blighted areas where misery, disease and poverty render life sterile and colorless. There are places where the sun is forever obscured and where little children know not the consistent joys which belong to youth. There is a form of toil that approximates slavery and that destroys both vigor and initiative before the worker has gained maturity and ripeness of years. There is a sordidness about life today that overcasts it with impenetrable mists and renders it utterly gray and monotonous. It is against these conditions that Christmas and the Christmas spirit eloquently inveigh.

The humble place of the Savior's birth proclaims to men a new and better way. It exalts the holiest of

human values—home, motherhood, childhood—and gives them supreme place among our choicest treasures. It tells us once again that "all our pomp of yesterday is one with Nineveh and Tyre." It invests that which seems poor and mean and seemingly unworthy with a richness and beauty that defies the genius of artists and minstrels. It comes once again to this harassed, distracted, storm-tossed world of ours and reminds us that not by might, nor by power, but by a fresh infusion of Christ's spirit shall we come to days of tranquillity and peace. It is no dream of visionary, no allegory of some house beautiful which this hallowed day sets forth. It is a virtue crowned with divine approval; love manifest in holiest form; motherhood and childhood exalted to the place of highest preferment; God revealing through conditions and circumstances within our power to comprehend, the humility of his condescension and the limitless extent of his love. Bethlehem and its matchless story become the interpreters of all that is best and holiest in life and give us the key to that larger vision of happiness and contentment that is the yearning of men the world over. Even a stable may become as a palace, a manger a throne, when invested with that interpretation of life which the Christ Child brings. Here we see our rich and ornate gifts rendered poor and shabby as we subject them to comparison with that which he bestows.

FOOLISH BUILDING

We think, poor mortals that we are, that life consists in the abundance of things we possess. He tells us that contentment and satisfaction are alone enjoyed by those who receive him as their King and Lord. We magnify the little world in which for a brief space we have our dwelling place; he speaks of the life abundant that beginning here knows no ending beyond the bounds of time and sense. We talk of peace and fellowship as though these were conditions that might be effected through pacts and agreements; he unfolds to our vision the possibilities of world order wrought out by men whose souls are inspired with a conception of brotherhood born of consistent and righteous dealing. We in fancied security build navies and defenses to keep us safe from the selfish wills and desires of those who covet our possessions; he calls us so to secure ourselves in the armor of a blameless character that we may be fortified against all the assaults of the enemy.

The greatest enemy with whom we have to do is born of the lust and pride and selfishness that war in our members. It is no trite or idle word spoken to men of old: "Sin is a curse to any people."

We have built without reference to that which we profess to believe is the world's surest guarantee against disorder, namely, the impregnability of Christian character. While we guard our outposts we tragically neglect our finest resources as constituted by our homes and firesides. While we arm our men and fortify our frontiers, we permit the moral standards of our domestic and social habit to be weakened by usages that enervate and destroy moral character. While we press with tireless zeal our trade at home and abroad, we indulge in ways and practices that must ultimately undermine our efficiency and impair our institutions. We are bunglers at best, and while we proclaim our skill and herald our enterprise and genius to the world, we fail to make sure our footings or to build our estate to withstand the storms that at times threaten its ruin and destruction.

RICHES IN POVERTY

The poverty of riches and the riches of poverty find their supreme illustration in the incidents that attended the birth of the Christ Child. The incarnation, the manifestation of God in the person of Jesus Christ, is not only the revelation of divine love in its most perfect form: It is the lifting up of our poor, human nature and the disclosure of the potentialities that reside in lives redeemed and made splendid by his presence. "A man is of more worth than a sheep," is the ancient word. Life cannot be expressed in terms of material values. The stored-up treasures of him who built his barns wherein to safeguard himself against the day of misfortune incurred the stern judgment: "Tonight shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall those things be wherein thou trustedst?"

Our reckoning is all wrong. We have toiled long and tirelessly and what have we gained? A disordered and disorderly world. We have created perfect mechanisms, accelerated speed, increased luxuries, harnessed the waters and the air, built goodly houses for the few and tenements for the many, paid in the blood of our sons a prodigal price for a devastating and fruitless war; burdened the nations with debt and effected such dislocation of industry as the world has never known before, and what have we got in exchange? Nothing; not even the benefits that accrue to hard-earned experience. Our course is wrong, wickedly wrong. It must be corrected, and that without delay. What does the Christmas story teach us? What is the deep meaning of this exhibition of riches in poverty? Why is the sweetest, holiest incident in the annals of all history clothed in such lowliness and humbleness of circumstance? Surely it is designed to teach us the sacredness and the nobility of human life when enriched and illumined by a true understanding of its real value. To endue men with a right conception of life's meaning, to place spiritual above material values, to give us God's estimate of what man may become—all this, and more, the Bethlehem story sets forth. Your life and mine take on a new meaning in the light of this interpretation. We cannot think of men as mere parts of some vast machine, to be used until failing strength or multiplying years render them unfit for further service. We cannot measure their worth solely by what they can produce or what they can earn.

WHAT IS THE STATE?

The state is something more than an aggregation of human units that constitute its man power or its money power; life is a larger, finer thing than such a poor appraisal would suggest. It has loftier possibilities, higher hopes, a diviner purpose. Here we see the poverty of riches, as we appraise them. Here the riches of poverty where poverty is defined and expressed in terms of life's real worth. "For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." What a paradox have we here! God stripped of his glory and majesty

that he might translate in understandable terms the true riches of life.

The world on this latest Christmas day is still viewing this strange scene without comprehending its mighty implications. It is standing apart and with diverted vision trying to reconcile its estimate of life with a revelation it does not and will not understand. We portray this glowing scene on canvas, render it vocal in song, weave it in the text of inspiring verse, but its deeper, finer meaning eludes us. Eloquently, once again it appeals to us for recognition, it appeals with a pathos that would seem to be irresistible. Over against our poor and inadequate estimate of human values it presents its claim. Its cry is for a trial of its method. Our schemes and plans fail us, our gold standards by which we measure our wealth and efficiency lose their proud place, our laborers go uncared for and unrewarded, and the machinery of our life ceases to function.

Dare we make a new venture? Dare we appropriate the Christian ideal of life? Dare we make the application of its Christmas lesson of peace and good will to a world that is paralyzed by fear and distracted by apprehensions of impending disaster?

May we answer this summons with courage and quickened intelligence, and bind in a great fellowship those to whom a mighty challenge is given, and who, under God, may make such contribution to the world's peace and happiness as it has never before known.

The Face of Jesus

By Rowland Gray-Smith

Seeing it is God that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. II Corinthians 4:6.

I HAVE recently read a book entitled "The Christ of the Men of Art." It is a work by J. R. Aitken, feelingly written and amply illustrated. It includes a selection of forty-eight representations of the face of Jesus in art, and it has been upon these my eyes have feasted. I need not comment upon the fact that these likenesses of Christ are unlike one another. In portraying him there has been no standardization of feature and proportion. There has been no objective model. The New Testament is silent with regard to the physical appearance of Jesus. His biographers fail to give the slightest hint as to what he looked like. Throughout the Roman empire, however, there were many portrait painters and it has been said that the earliest portraits preserve his actual likeness. In particular, this is said of one portrait which was discovered about the year 1600 in the cemetery of Domitilla in the Catacombs of Rome—a work which is not much later than the first century.

As the great masters have painted the face of Jesus, it is not a similarity of physical feature that unites their work. Their bond of union is deeper. They have been one in marshaling all the powers of their soul and all the skill of their art to give a space-time expression to their infinite ideal, to present in the features of a human face all that God in man could be to them.

In our text from Paul, he is not using the word "face" literally. As painters have sought to put on canvas their ideal of Christ rather than to present the Jesus of history realistically, so Paul turns from the Jesus of flesh and blood to the Christ who is a great light illuminating men's hearts and minds. The light of the knowledge of the indwelling Christ was comparable only to the creation of light at the world's beginning. The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ was like unto the glory of the sun and moon and all the stars that sang together when the world was young and pure. The legend of Moses, too, told of a revelation of God's glory to man. Upon Sinai's mount Moses had talked with God as with a friend. He had said: "Show me, I pray thee, thy glory." And the Lord hid Moses in the cleft of a rock and covered him with his hand as he passed by. But no man could look upon his countenance and live. So he withheld the vision of his face and showed only his back. That old revelation now appeared as the morning twilight that preceded the dawn. Now God has shown his face. The glory of God has reached its noonday splendor in the face of Jesus Christ.

With what poor words shall we this morning attempt a portrait of Jesus! Yet if we dare to draw an outline it will not be of the Christ of the picture-makers of medieval days with their heavy symbolisms; it will be of the Jesus of the earliest art, rich in its treatment of his daily acts, his kind and noble deeds. It is the knowledge of these we would have shining in our hearts today.

THE KINDLINESS OF JESUS

Of the four characteristics of the countenance of Jesus which I will mention, my first will be a vision of its inviting kindliness. The great eyes of the earliest portrait have about them an attractiveness that makes it easy to understand how both little children and outcasts were drawn to his presence. No one has ever painted a fully smiling Christ. There is something incongruous in the very thought of doing so. Yet there is no doubt that he smiled upon little children. When his disciples, more serious and stiff, would have driven the little children away, he welcomed them to his knee.

Then there was the leper whom Jesus actually touched. The great enigma of this is the presence of the pariah of the tombs within arm's length of Jesus. To the supposed contagion of his disease was added a ceremonial uncleanness. Yet this man who was to cry "Unclean!" whenever he came within distant earshot of his fellows was at the forefront of those who clustered around Jesus. It is said that the only solution of this enigma is that Jesus had lifted up his eyes beyond the outskirts of the crowd, and the leper, himself all eagerness, had caught the welcoming glance. In that look there was an interest so sincere that it suspended the diseased man's quarantine, a kindliness so inviting that for the moment the leper was lifted up into forgetfulness of his leprosy. Thus was he drawn within the crowd and straightway found himself at the feet of Jesus. Again, the Hebrew legend had said that when Moses descended from the mountain the people shrank

back from the unearthly light that shone upon his face. Not so the biographers of Jesus.

When Jesus descended from the Mount of Transfiguration where his "face did shine as the sun," all the multitude saw him and came running unto him. "We beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth."

HIS DETERMINED FAITHFULNESS

Our second characteristic of the countenance of Jesus will be a vision of its determined faithfulness. Among the many portraits of Jesus I know of none that emphasizes his massive strength of will. Too many artists have revealed him as a helpless victim of circumstances. In striking contrast to these is Giorgione's masterpiece, "Christ Bearing His Cross." He gives us a high born, well bred Christ, possessed of a calm dignity and quiet serenity that can capture our eyes for hours. This comes nearest of all to the conception we have in mind here.

We would like to include in our poor verbal portrait something of his manly grit. Listen therefore to these records. Luke says: "And it came to pass when the days were well nigh come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." Mark says: "They were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going before them: and they were amazed." John says: "Jesus therefore knowing all things that were coming upon him, went forth." Along the road he had hitherto walked he had seen the signs pointing to his journey's end. The end was inevitable if he did not renounce his teaching. Yet knowing everything that was to come to pass, he went forth, his face set. Though he saw the betrayal of Judas, the scattering of his disciples, the mockery of the priests in the house of Caiaphas, the coarse soldiers round the whipping post in Pilate's palace, the multitude in the streets crying for his blood, the Via Dolorosa to Calvary and the dark cross there against the evening sky. Knowing all things, his face was as a flint against their faces and his forehead as an adamant harder than flint against their foreheads. As his firm step strode on to meet his fate, his disciples followed, and as they looked upon his face, they were amazed.

No, we cannot exclude this stability of resolve, strength of determination, firmness of will from our portrait of Jesus. This, too, is part of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

SURPASSING COMPASSION

In the third place, the countenance of Jesus is a vision of warm compassion. In the home at Bethany where Jesus stood during the last fateful days of his life, we are at the fireside which witnessed his singular tenderness of heart. It was the home upon which the shadow of bereavement had been cast when Mary and Martha had suffered the loss of their brother Lazarus. With a fine sense of the dramatic the translators of our English Bible have separated a sentence of only two words from the sentences that precede and follow it. It is thus the shortest verse in all the Bible. The sentence is, "Jesus wept." It is a sentence which needs a pause before it and a pause after it. It records a fact of which no artist would attempt a photographic representation.

Again, as we join in the procession of those who go with him from Bethany upon his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, ascending the gentle slope of the Mount of Olives, we reach the bend in the road at the top of the hill from which we can see the city itself lying before us. If there is any satisfaction that comes from popular acclaim, the cup of his joy might have been full. He sees the palm branches waved in his honor, his colt treads softly on the devout carpetings of many admirers who take their cloaks from their shoulders and spread them on his path, in his ears echo the triumphant hosannahs of a great host of followers. Yet amid all this his cheeks

ROWLAND GRAY-SMITH

are wet with tears again, with tears shed not for himself. "When he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it." On tear-stained cheeks shines again the glory of God in the warm compassion of Jesus Christ.

UNDESERVED SUFFERING

Our portrait is finished in a vision of undeserved suffering. It is impossible to gather into words the suffering of the many "Ecce Homos" of the painter's art. Not altogether do they do full justice to their theme. Our best response is a great silence before them. The really great artists bathed their cheeks in tears while their hands worked upon them. Luke has put it all in a sentence: "He hid not his face from shame and spitting." As the suffering servant of the Lord, his visage was marred more than any man's. It is after he has been clothed with the purple robe of mockery and the crown of thorns has been pressed about his head that Pilate brings him out to be viewed by the multitudes that fill the street, and says unto them, "Behold the man!" Although there is no frenzy of sorrow, no bewilderment of pain, but only an infinite patience, yet

our eyes are blinded. We cannot look. We hide in the cleft of the rock and keep our thoughts averted from the mighty ocean. Yet ever and anon the great ocean fullness is heard, the sound of a love that seeks not its own and loves itself last, whose boundaries we cannot scan, whose depths we cannot fathom.

It is the glory of the love of God in the marred face of Jesus Christ.

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH JESUS?

Is there time to ask what we ought to do with this picture—this picture of inviting kindliness, determined faithfulness, warm compassion and suffering undeserved? There are two possibilities that are open to us and we are done when we have mentioned them.

On the one hand we may take it to our hearts. There are many things that men call glory and many worthy images of success that hold their fascination. Yet when once we have seen the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ I think many will want it to shine in their hearts and to reflect in them something of its likeness. An old legend tells of a weeping daughter of Jerusalem named Veronica who took pity upon Jesus and with her handkerchief wiped the blood from his brow. And, lo, the imprint of his face was on the cloth! There are at least two such cloths in existence today. Actually they are cloths taken from the faces of the dead. "The same desire that led men to paint Christ's face over their graves in the Catacombs of Rome led them also to paint it or draw it on the face-cloths of their dead, and leave their dear ones sleeping with the Christ-face lying on theirs." The likeness they coveted in life was to be imprinted on their faces in death. If there is anything of the kindliness, faithfulness, compassion and love of Jesus that we take to our hearts, the genuine and permanent glory of God shall rest upon us. "We all, with unveiled faces reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory."

On the other hand it is quite possible to renounce this image. We may take our best portrait of the matchless face and turn it to the wall. We may content ourselves with a different kind of glory. But even then, I am not sure that we shall not have to reckon with it. Having refused to take it to our hearts its light may serve only to show our own darkness. There are two references to the face of Jesus in the New Testament which we have not yet mentioned. They stand in a context which is deep in allegory but they are, nonetheless, rich in meaning. The dreamer of Patmos in depicting the glory of the redeemed said that "they shall see his face." This was the climax of the bliss of the new Jerusalem. But others he depicts as hiding themselves in the caves and the rocks of the mountains and crying out their own condemnation: "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne." We do not like the angry giant of a Christ in Michelangelo's painting of the Last Judgment. It is not the Jesus we know and whose portrait we have tried to paint. But if we turn our best portrait of him to the wall and seek for ourselves another kind of glory, I am not sure that the rejected vision will ever let us live in peace. If we do not take it to our hearts, we, too, shall store up for ourselves the anguish of a lost ideal.

A Christmas Prayer

By William Fraser McDowell

BLESSED God and Father of us all, we unite with Thy children everywhere to sing "joy to the world" as the angels again fill the skies with praise and proclaim once more the eternally good news. Blessed be Thy name that Thou hast cared for Thy people, wrought redemption for them and raised up for them a Savior to free them from sin, from fear and all unrighteousness. Thou hast shown us the tender mercy of our God and hast made the Dawn to visit us from on high, to shine on those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide the steps of mankind into the way of peace. We have heard the good news and felt the great joy. Our eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord and we laud and magnify Thy holy Name this day.

As we rejoice and give thanks we pray that we may not miss the meaning of the coming of Christ into our world so long ago. As he comes again in the fullness of our times may his own know him and receive him and in him receive also the power to be children of God. We pray that we may be made to think of Bethlehem's babe as the person he became, the Christ of the sermons, the parables, the teachings, the miracles of mercy and healing; the Christ of Bethany and Jerusalem, Gethsemane, Calvary and the open grave. We want to think of him, O Father, in all that he means to us and might mean to us but does not because of our unbelief. We long that he may descend to us, cast out our sin and enter in—be born in us today. As we look at him in all that he was and think of him in all that he is, we pray that we may become men and women in Christ, and test our lives by his.

And we pray for the races and nations of our world, that in them Christ may rule and lead, whose right it is to rule and lead. We seem so far from the fulfillment of his purposes that our hearts cry out for something to happen that has not happened in our world. We pray that nations and races shall be his disciples, as they are not; that they shall be sworn to him by a new and sacred pledge as in baptism; that they, in our time, shall observe and obey the things he taught, until everywhere in the world the ends of love are won, and peace and brotherhood in Christ have come. We long to sing "joy to the world" again, to have Christ rule the world with truth and grace, to have the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love. For all this we long and pray, O God, our Father. And all this we ask in the name of Christ. Amen.

Four Reasons For Preaching

By Samuel Harkness

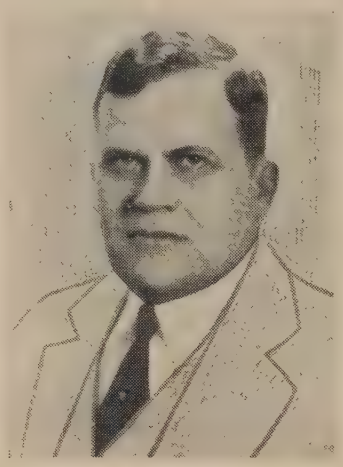
WHEN a man tells you what he does and why he does it, you will discover two things about him—his outlook on life will be colored by the nature of his occupation and his work will be a source of joy to him, if he can put his own creative genius into it. What a man does must be important to him, if he is to do it with a flair. A trashman who served us years ago startled me one day by saying: "You and I are in the same business: I haul trash away from people's houses; you haul it away from their minds." Another thing he said sticks in my memory: "This world ain't nothing but a big trash can to me, but I try to leave it cleaner than I find it." That man had romanticized his work until it had taken on some aspect of dignity. One of the most genuine prayers which ever crossed human lips is this: "Establish Thou the work of our hands upon us. Yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." It deals with something actual and immediate.

My conception of preaching has been changing ever since I entered the ministry. The older I get, the more certain I am that preaching must be an interpretation of life itself to those now living, an interpretation that does not shun the worst nor doubt the best. A minister recently declared himself in favor of a moratorium on preaching. I agree with him but for reasons he probably would not countenance. Not a moratorium, but permanent quietus, should be put upon that preaching which is preoccupied with the tumbling of the walls of Jericho, unless tumbling walls are shown to be the imperishable symbol of a decadent people; that preaching which consists in blowing rhetorical bubbles of vague and sentimentalized piety which has nothing to do with the reasons why people cheat each other and make each other miserable; and that preaching which allows men and women to leave the house of God confirmed in their prejudices and satisfied with their approximations of goodness.

I shall now attempt to give you four reasons for preaching authenticated in experience:

● *Preaching a Spiritual Necessity*

The first has to do with necessity. I have observed with astonishment that those who have the advantages of learning, authority, leisure and comfort are not immune from the gravest spiritual necessity. Aldous Huxley's novel, "Eyeless in Gaza," is a picture of educated and talented people. They possess comfort, prestige and even charm, but have lost their emotional capacities for loyalty to anyone or any cause and for peace within themselves. They talk continually about their need to be free, but have no idea for what man must be free. They rush off to the Riviera or the jungle to get away from one another, but they can never get away from themselves. With everything needed for happy and useful lives within easy reach, they dwell in misery. And in all their bewilderment and despair they do remind us of the blind Samson feeling for the pillars of the temple in Gaza that he



Samuel Harkness

may pull it down upon the heads of his tormentors. Are these people in Huxley's novel unreal, untypical? I sadly confess that I have known them all.

Another aspect of contemporary necessity is vividly put by the poet, Robert Hillyer, when he says of the machine:

> We watch each other, our fates intertwined:
> It feeds us canned goods and we feed it mind.

Plutarch records that a certain caste of slaves in his day were distinguished by the wearing of golden collars. Were he to return today he would find that caste still in bondage. While lying beside a mountain stream last summer, the thought came to me that our life has become a torrent in which individuals are drops swept on forever or dashed against the rocks as spray, evaporated by the sun and flung back as rain. Of course, we get a tremendous ride over the rapids of "boom times" and pools of economic stagnation and have a variety of sensations, but we do become weary of being tumbled about and we cannot view what is happening to us with any degree of objectivity.

A young fellow entering college this fall said to me: "Will the change in my life be as great as it has been in yours?" "Yes," I answered. "It will be greater. We have merely found new ways of doing things and more things to do. We have been so busy shifting to a motorized existence, we haven't had time to develop a philosophy for it. Your generation must create new social patterns and give new meaning to existence." In the fact of this necessity there is a reason for preaching. As Isaiah stood in the market places of Israel, so the modern prophet must stand in the midst of life's deepening cruelty and increasing hopelessness and speak of fulfilments, not artificial and incapable of transmission, but real and intimate as the powers of sight and understanding with which we regard each other.

● *Religion is Forever Indispensable*

Such fulfilments obtain in religion, the second reason for preaching. And what is religion? Well, for the majority, it is like an ancient city buried in the jungle, once magnificent and shimmering with color, but now drained of all human meaning. Yet religion has three values which make it forever indispensable for the fulfilment of human necessity.

It is, first, a sense of and gesture toward mystery. In the Colorado State Museum at Denver, one may see small sticks bound together with deerskin thongs. They are a thousand years old and were once the cherished possessions of the Cliff Dwellers. When they gathered in their kivas—ceremonial pits sunk in the earth and roofed with timbers and adobe mud—they undid the thongs and spread the sticks called "pahoes" symmetrically before the altar. Each pahoe represented a departed member of the clan. They gathered their beloved dead into the fellowship of worship. Also the Cliff Dweller had what he called "tipone," a conical shaped base, hollowed in the center and made of adobe, in which he placed feathers, "prayer plumes," on his altar. These "prayer plumes" were placed upon the altar by individuals and they carried the unuttered petition of the worshiper to the particular god invoked. As one gazes upon these pahoes and tipones, he is faced with the most moving proof that a sense of and gesture toward mystery is essential to life.

Second, religion is a recognition of obligation toward our fellows.

Whether it has to do with the treatment of "the stranger within thy gates," as outlined in ancient Jewish law, or the more vivid and newly motivated conception phrased by Jesus in the going of the second mile and forgiveness "seventy times seven," there it is. Struggle against it as he may, wall it off with sophistries as he does, man cannot get rid of obligation. That this sense of obligation is now expressed in the dole is significant. When something is doled out, it is measured, calculated, barren of joy to the giver and shameful to the recipient. Religion furnishes obligation with a just and loving approach so that instead of helping people because we must, sympathy, like sunlight, bathes the whole landscape of duty.

And third, religion reveals to us just what manner of beings we are and what we may become. Too many of our contacts are like those convex and concave mirrors found in amusement parks which give us grotesque impressions of ourselves. If men want to use us, they flatter us. If they want to intimidate us, they demean us, accentuating our awkwardness and weakness. In either event, we get an untrue picture of ourselves. And we, ourselves, add to this process of illusion by trying to appear better than we are. In this world there seems to be no stopping place between gross caricature and idealized portraiture. Everywhere, convex and concave mirrors! Everywhere, parades of dubious motives wearing the most amiable and innocent expressions! There is one exception to this experience of distorted values and deceiving appearances: when we walk into God's house, we are compelled to recall the words of the psalmist, "Thou hast set our secret sins in the light of Thy face." True preaching liberates that penetrating and pervading power of the gospel which enables us to see ourselves as we actually are and as we may become. And this sense of and gesture toward mystery, this loving approach to obligation and this self-knowledge issuing in self-improvement must be continually nourished and advocated, for "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

● *Preaching a Source of Encourgement*

The third reason for preaching is that it is a source of strength and encouragement along the way. In Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," the Interpreter's House was about midway of the journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. The Slough of Despond and many a treacherous bypath had been left behind, but Doubting Castle with its Giant Despair and Vanity Fair with its cheapness and cruelty were still before. To minister to those who have faced grave difficulties and will have to face more is the privilege of the man who stands in the pulpit. In his humble and limited way, he emulates One of whom it was said, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

In his own life, the minister must face and deal with those elemental problems which are common to all. Fortunately, an academic approach to preaching is thus made difficult for him. He has too many contacts with human suffering and experiences as well as observes what pain and fear can do to a man. The preacher knows to what heights he calls others and with what self-denial and sacrifice they heed his call. Talk, no matter how scintillant, is not preaching. Preaching, somehow, must be brought up from the depths of all one is and take on all the color of his dreams. With Touchstone, the preacher must be able to say to his congregation, "A poor thing, but mine own." But if preaching is a source of strength and encouragement along the way, is it not the prerogative of all who believe in the kind of world advocated in churches? There is an old saying, "Practice what you preach." This the minister must attempt. But the sermon is not a boomerang; it is a net—and catches us all. And what happens after the sermon is the final validation of preaching. The greatest preacher of all closed with the words, "Go ye . . ."

● *The Challenge of Human Possibility*

And the fourth reason for preaching has to do with human possibility. There is the abiding lure of the pulpit. The preacher need not be a Simple Simon, peddling his wares of tarnished dreams and enduring the amused contempt of those who listen to his advocacy of an impossible good. Let him seize upon the courage of the suffering, the patience of the poor, the forgiveness of the ill-treated, the faith of the young, the elemental decencies of doing one's job well, of abiding by one's word. There is a gospel written out of the aspirations and endeavors of the past and the preacher must make it known. And there is another gospel, implicit in living experience, and the preacher must not be blind to it, for again and again it validates the highest thrusts of imagination and most dazzling displays of virtue. With my own eyes, I have seen blossomings of the spirit as rich and breathtaking as those recorded in the New Testament. And, after all, it is through men and women now alive that we must conjure the kingdom of God.

I should like to write a book about a genius who was not satisfied to put pretty thoughts on paper, but who would go beyond all that to complete and focus intimations of greatness in human beings, who would think of a free and loving person as a higher form of art than a sonnet, a statue or a painting. If the only test of genius is to equal or excel Wordsworth, Beethoven or Michelangelo, then genius is not so important as we had thought.

The frustration of genius, narrowly employed, is etched in Landor's words:

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;
Nature I loved and next to Nature Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

It may be said of Jesus that he was not content to warm his hands at the fires of life. He kindled new and brighter blazes, and he kindled them in the minds of men and women. Very few have a genius that can be expressed in classic forms of art, but everyone has a genius for helping people toward a richer understanding, a higher usefulness, if he will but exercise it. And to encourage this genius unto the fulfilment of necessity through a sense of mystery which finds expression in a gesture of faith, a loving approach to obligation and a willingness to look deeply and clearly into one's own life and better it; to fortify men scarred by old struggles for battles yet to come; and to urge them on toward all they can be—these are the reasons for preaching. Of the prophet it may be said:

He lifts a banner to the sun
And wakes a music in the heart;
Yours may the triumph be, if won,
But his the vision to impart.

Concerning Creeds

People get so troubled by what they call the creeds. "I cannot understand this. "I cannot accept what the church teaches." Let us go back to the beginning. It did not begin like that. He said "Follow Me." May I remind you that the creeds did not exist for three hundred years after, and when they did exist they were built up by man's experiences of Christ. They said: "Now we will put down all the things we believe so that others may believe them." The creeds were written down and built up to try and put into words what Christ did mean to them. The only creed that is worth twopence to you is not a creed that you tried to take over from your grandfather. The only creed that is going to be worth anything to you is the creed you built up out of your own experience of Christ. Start with the friendship and let your creed make itself.

Leslie D. Weatherhead.

This is an imperial era in the history of the world. All doors of opportunity are wide open. Christ calls for high-souled men and women who will go with him, not in the ignoble spirit of grudging service, but in the joyous spirit of full surrender.

Arthur J. Brown.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

FOLLOWING a service of several years as associate professor of Semitic languages and literatures in the University of Chicago, Dr. HERBERT L. WILLETT became professor of Oriental languages and literatures in 1915, and held that post until 1929, when he retired with the emeritus relation. During almost his entire teaching career, Dr. Willett has ministered to churches in greater Chicago. He is now pastor of Kenilworth (Ill.) Union Church. He is also a contributing editor of The Christian Century, with which paper he has been actively connected for more than a generation. Among Dr. Willett's books are "The Bible Through the Centuries" and "The Jew Through the Centuries."

*Receiving his B.D. degree from the Chi*cago Theological Seminary in 1901, Rev. HENRY KENDALL BOOTH was ordained in the Congregational ministry. Early pastorates were in Michigan City, Ind., Tucson, Ariz., and Sacramento and Berkeley, Cal. Since 1909 he has ministered at the First Congregational Church in Long Beach, Cal. Among his published books are "The Bridge Between the Testaments" and "The World of Jesus."

Born in Germany, Rev. ANDREAS BARD came to this country in 1890, and was ordained in the Lutheran church four years later, having graduated from Wartburg Theological Seminary in 1903. His early pastorates were in Ellensburg and Walla Walla, Wash. H has led the activities of St. Mark's Church, Kansas Ci Mo., since 1910. He has published a number of books.

An Australian by birth, Rev. FREDERI W. NORWOOD won wide fame by his ministry at the C Temple in London. He has recently retired from his m istry there to give his entire time as preacher and l turer to the cause of peace and good will.

Rev. JAMES E. FREEMAN *has for ma* years served as bishop of the Protestant Episcopal chur resident in Washington, D. C. The sermon published this issue is part of an address delivered some time a over an international broadcast.

Dr. ROWLAND GRAY-SMITH *was train* for the ministry at Spurgeon's College, London, Eng., a holds a Ph.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvan Last year he was assistant editor of the Christian Regist and is now professor of philosophy at Emerson Colle Boston, Mass.

Rev. WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL is retired bishop of the Methodist Episcopal church, reside in Washington, D. C.

Rev. SAMUEL HARKNESS *is minister* the Winnetka Congregational (Community) Church, W netka, Ill.

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

KING D. BEACH, First Methodist, Tacoma, Wash. "The Christian in an Unchristian World." Phil. 2:15—"Children of God . . . in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights . . . holding forth the word of life."

G. MERRILL LENOX, Judson Memorial Baptist, Minneapolis, Minn. "A Moratorium on Despair." John 15:11—"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."

WILLIAM A. JACOBS, First Congregational, Menasha, Wis. "Beyond Goodness." Matt. 5:20—"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. . . ."

LESLIE D. VESEY, Methodist, Lebanon, O. "Contagious Living." Rom. 14:7—For none of us liveth to himse and no man dieth to himself." Matt. 5:16—"Let yo light so shine before men, that they may see your go works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

M. S. HOSTETLER, Community Presbyterian, Greenriv Utah. "Unfinished Business." John 5:17—"My Fath works unceasingly, and so do I." (Weymouth)

NORMAN TAYLOR, Methodist, Tempe, Ariz. "The Ha Truth of a Half-Gospel." Matt. 23:23b—"but the ye ought to have done, and not to have left the oth undone."

H. T. RAFNEL, First Baptist, Salem, Ind. "The Strate of Jesus." Matt. 5:1, 2—"And when he was set, l disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, a taught them. . . ."

W. G. JONES, St. Andrew's (United), Three Rivers, Qu bec. "Having a Good Opinion of Oneself." 1 Jo 3:2—"Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not y appear what we shall be."

RALPH KEESAER, Mt. Hope Methodist, Anderson, In "Mirages of Life." Prov. 14:12—"There is a w which *seemeth* right unto a man."

EDGAR M. WISDOM, St. Mark's Methodist, Cleburne, Te "The One Sure Way Out." 1 Tim. 6:19—"Secure t life which is life indeed."

EDWIN C. BOYNTON, First Christian, Huntsville, Tex "A Living Dead Man." Acts 8:2a—"And devout m buried Stephen."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

.....
Title of sermon

.....
Text used (write out the text)

.....
Name of minister

.....
Name of church

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Address

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE National Preaching Mission will be coming to its end in New York City soon after these words are printed. It has been a project of considerable value to the churches and especially to the clergy of the country. Twenty-five cities have been visited. Everywhere the people have turned out in large numbers, in some cities huge municipal auditoriums having been used for night and Sunday services. The Federal Council of Churches deserves credit for undertaking it and carrying it through. The name itself was an inspiration. The preachers who participated gave their time and strength without honorarium, a fact which calls for appreciation of their salary paying institutions—local church, college or church board—as well as of the men themselves. I heard the group that visited Chicago. It was the first time I had heard Dr. Truett. He reminded me of Bishop McDowell in his physical presence as well as in his preaching manner. I had heard Stanley Jones and Lynn Harold Hough on several previous occasions. The sheer physical vitality of these men is amazing. Jones spoke five times on the day when I spent an hour in his hotel room and he was apparently as fresh as a daisy! I wonder if we ought not keep him in America now. I believe there is a greater message in his heart than he has yet uttered. I wish Stanley Jones might be called by the churches, as I believe he is called of God, to help us face the problem of church union in this crucial hour.

Preaching Mission Comes to Its End

The Book of the Month

HIGHWAYS OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, *by Shirley Jackson Case. Willett, Clark & Company, $2.*

DEAN CASE, of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, has a genius for surveying a long perspective of history, selecting the elements that are important, ignoring minor details and showing how thought or institution marched on from stage to stage. This is a gift rare among thoroughgoing scholars. Dr. Case has performed this service for us in several books, but in none so attractively as in these Lowell Lectures of 1936. I found the book as interesting as a novel. Dr. Case is creating a new picture of Christian beginnings from data which the most modern scholarship, including his own, has been bringing forward. As he sees it, the Christian church started off with beliefs that were more akin to those of present day fundamentalists than to those of liberal theologians. These beliefs were: That Jesus had been raised from the dead, that he had ascended to the right hand of God and that his return to earth to establish the messianic kingdom was imminent. Christianity expanded because the initial believers went forth proclaiming not a theology, nor a body of moral teaching, but a fact, a faith and a hope. The doctrines of Christianity emerged historically under the pressure of the practical circumstances in which the church found itself. The book shows the development of those doctrines—of God, of Christ, of a holy Scripture, of the church, etc.—in their concrete relation to actual situations which stimulated them. The most fascinating chapter, to me, is the one entitled "The March to Imperialism" in which Dean Case suggests the parallel between the times of Augustine and our own.

A Thought for the Month

HOW MUCH is the present world crisis due to the backsliding of civilization, and how much is it due to the presence in civilization of positive spiritual energies? This question is fundamental. Its answer will determine the mood in which we contemplate the existing scene. If the crisis spells the increasing wickedness of man and the failure of Christianity, we shall have ground for discouragement. But if it spells a decisive battle between Christianity and long existing evils, a battle which has been joined now for the first time, then we are bound to react with the thrill of the conflict and the hope of victory. There is a word of Jesus which keeps haunting me as I view the world scene: "I came," he says, "not to send peace but a sword." And he goes on to tell what he means: "I came to set a man against his father, the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law." In a word, Jesus warned us that he would be a trouble maker! Why then should we be dismayed when trouble appears? Against any kind of peace which rests upon a compromise with injustice Christianity sets itself in resistance and judgment. This spells crisis. I believe the present world crisis in many of its aspects is due to the presence and increasing power of Christ in our civilization. Look back at the Great War. We are told again and again that the war demonstrated the failure of Christianity. It could also be said that the war demonstrated how much more potent Christianity is than ever before. There have always been wars. But no war was ever brought before the bar of the conscience of mankind until the World War. For the first time a war precipitated a moral crisis. Our economic crisis is of the same sort. It arises not from a bad fact but from a good fact. This fact is the steady rise of the working classes from slavery, to serfdom, to a proletariat, and now to the point where they demand equality with owners, if not ownership itself. I think the economic crisis could be resolved overnight if labor would go back to its subordinate, dependent status and be content with whatever capital would give it. But labor will not do that, and we do not want it to do that. Therefore there is a crisis. In every crisis, before we give way to discouragement, it is well to look on the obverse side of the shield. A crisis may spell progress.

Christ the World's Trouble Maker

Charles Clayton Morrison

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